



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information, Contact:
Marlene Kouba, Secretary
North Dakota State Health Council
Phone: 701.563.4560
E-mail: mmkouba@ndsupernet.com

State Health Council Announces Newest Recipients of Loan Repayment Program

BISMARCK, N.D. – The State Health Council, in conjunction with the North Dakota Department of Health, announces that 11 health professionals have been approved through the Grant Loan Repayment Programs approved by the state legislature. Applications from one nurse practitioner, four physicians and six dentists were accepted during their May meeting.

Sarah Beth Gustafson was the selected nurse practitioner and will be practicing in Mayville.

The physicians chosen were Dr. David Keene who will work in Williston, Dr. Christopher A. DeCock will work in Fargo, plus Dr. Brook Vinine Nelson and Dr. Heather Martin who will both work in Dickinson.

Approved dentists were Jackie R. Nord who will practice in Grand Forks, Courtney Rud and Clarissa Sparkman will be in Fargo, Lucas Allen will practice in Watford City, Narek Ovsepiyan will work in Watford City, and Ryan J. Yakowicz will practice in Hankinson.

The skills of these health professionals are filling a growing need in those cities and the surrounding areas, especially in western North Dakota where the increased population is demanding more health services. The current increase and the anticipated growth for such services helped the Council determine all of these selections for the program.

“The Council receives a growing number of applications from qualified and skilled medical professionals. All were very deserving of the awards,” said Gordon Myerchin, chair of the State Health Council. “Much of the state is seeing a workforce shortage in many areas, including various health fields and these 11 awardees will help to fill those needs.”

The Loan Repayment Programs are awarded to physicians, nurse practitioners, dentists and veterinarians to help them pay for their educational loans and who have agreed to work in areas of the

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

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state that do not have enough applicants to meet the needs of the area. The State Health Council awards the loan repayments based on funding and the criteria set by the legislature. The Council's 11 members are appointed by the governor for three-year terms. Four members are appointed from the health-care provider community, five consumers from the public sector, one from the energy industry and one from the manufacturing and processing industry.

For more information, contact Marlene Kouba, State Health Council, at 701.563.4560.

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